

The Chronicle and Index

OF THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY.

No. 21, Vol. ii.]

BELFAST, NOVEMBER 1st, 1882,

[For Gratuitous Circulation

WE have to acknowledge the receipt of *two shillings* in stamps, from Rev. H. A. McGowan, in aid of the gratuitous publication and the circulation of the *Chronicle and Index*, and shall be glad to acknowledge further contributions from other friends.

INTERESTING TO OUR READERS.—*A number of us have joined together in a Book Club or Reading Society. Each pays Five Shillings a year, and for that obtains a year's reading of valuable books. With his subscription each Member may say what book he would like to have bought with the money. Such Member has the first use of the book he suggests. Two or three Subscribers may together ask for a more expensive volume. Among the books suggested so far are: "The Republic of God," by Dr. Mulford; "Spinoza," by Dr. Martineau; "Theology in the English Poets," by Stopford Brooke; "Natural Religion," by Seeley; "The Peak in Darien," by Miss Cobbe; "What is the Bible?" by Sunderland; "The Immortal Life," by Weiss; "The Religion of Evolution," by Savage," &c., &c. These we give to indicate the kind of book. Any Member of the Reading Society may send a list of such books as he is willing to sell to the Society, to the Secretary, with prices named, to Mr. Wright. The Reading Society opens on this date, Wednesday, November 1st. Persons wishing to share its privileges should send the Subscription of 5s to J. J. Wright, Secretary of Reading Society, 16 Queen's Arcade, Belfast. We may say that any of our readers are eligible. The Room upstairs at 16 Queen's Arcade will be open to their use for reading and writing, and on the table will be found all the denominational papers, &c.*

Do our country friends, in their visits to Belfast, keep in mind that the Unitarian Depository is now in the Queen's Arcade, Donegall Place? We are glad to say it is proving in all respects a valuable centre of religious activity,—that its comfortable committee room, which is available for those who wish to read and write there, is in good demand, and that its well filled shelves offer a great attraction to visitors and buyers.

We invite the attention of all our friends to it, and hope they will fully avail themselves of the privileges which it offers.

AN excellent man, at once a fine scholar, a good preacher, and an earnest patriot, has passed out of the ranks of the Liberal workers in Ireland. The Rev. James Orr, of Clonmel, is dead. He was in our midst only the other day, and seemed likely to maintain his vigour for years to come, and yet he has passed on swiftly and silently. He will be missed in many directions, and mourned by many sorrowing hearts. Though belonging to a somewhat Conservative school of theologic thought, he was always in sympathy with progressive movements, and would never allow himself for more than a passing moment, if so long, to be betrayed into intolerant action or retrogressive movements. His sympathies were always liberal. We venture to cast our wreath of kindly memories upon his grave. The earnest spirit has gone home.

THE Rev. J. C. Street re-commenced his Sunday Evening Lectures in Rosemary Church, after an interval of four months, on the first Sunday evening in October, and was welcomed back to his duties by a large and attentive audience. His subjects for the first four Sundays have been as follow—October 1st, "The Gospel for the present age;" October 8th, "Faith and Faithfulness;" October 15th, "Bishops and Deans on Christian Unity;" and October 22nd, "A step higher still." The audiences have been large and appreciative.

It will be seen from our advertising columns that the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association are, in addition to their regular programme, which is of a most interesting character, taking the bold step of inviting a distinguished literary man from England, to deliver a course of Three Lectures, in the Lecture Hall, early in November. Dr. Spencer T. Hall, widely known as the "Sherwood Forester," and as a man of mark in the literary and scientific world, is sure to command large audiences, and

we do not doubt that not only the Members of the Association, but also a considerable number of the general public will gladly avail themselves of the opportunity of seeing and hearing the distinguished visitor.

"In the love of truth, and in the spirit of Jesus Christ, we join for the worship of God, and the service of man." Such is the basis or covenant of the Rev. T. Slicer's church, in Providence, Rhode Island. We like it. There is no trace of a dogmatic creed, but there is a fine covenant for worship and work. Are there no more of our churches and church organizations that could unite on the same basis? Non-subscribers with such a basis would deserve the name.

THERE has been a great Church Congress at Derby. Bishops and other dignitaries were there in great numbers, as well as multitudes of the laity. They seemed all to be seeking after light and unity. They all felt how much groping there was in darkness, and they were painfully alive to the divisions among Christians. But they sought for light in dogma, and for unity in uniformity. Is it any wonder they failed, and that the Congress at times broke into violent controversies and stormy scenes of disorder? Only in freedom and in spiritual unity can any Church find light and peace.

WE are glad to learn that the Unitarian movement in the Isle of Man continues to make satisfactory progress. On Wednesday evening, October 11th, our friends there held a tea meeting in St. James's Hall, Douglas. The hall was very tastefully decorated for the occasion with evergreens, banners, and Scriptural mottoes—"God is love," "The Lord our God is one Lord" &c. After tea the chair was occupied by Mr. J. de Maine Brown, and the meeting was addressed by the Rev. S. Fletcher Williams, and Mr. J. Barron. An excellent programme of music, &c., was gone through by various ladies and gentlemen. The Rev. S. Fletcher Williams said his visit to the island had been very pleasurable. He had come to render whatever humble services he could to the infant movement, and was pleased with what he had heard and seen. He was delighted to witness the progress made by the Unitarians of Douglas during the past year. At the close of the season in 1881, the number of persons at the tea meeting was 16; but this year of 1882, the number was 81,

increased to 100 after tea, and, with one exception, all of them residents. That was an increase not surpassed, if it was equalled, by any other church on the island. The rev. gentleman commended them warmly for having opened a Sunday school, and spoke encouragingly of the devotedness they displayed in carrying on the movement through evil and good report. He then gave a sketch of his own progress from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism. The son of an orthodox minister, he and two brothers became ministers. One of them was still connected with the Methodist New Connection, and was now stationed in Belfast. The other had, like himself, become a Unitarian. He had himself been trained by two Independent ministers, whose memories and whose mental and spiritual qualities were very precious to him, for the ministry of the Congregational body. But in the course of time, he had found himself on an insecure basis, and after a lengthened period of great mental distress, he found rest in the gospel of Unitarianism, and through the counsel of the Rev. J. R. McKee, formerly of Shrewsbury, now of London, decided to enter upon what he had been destined for from his boyhood, the ministry, only among the Unitarians, instead of the Congregationalists. He rejoiced in the faith he had adopted as more in accordance with the Scriptures, more in harmony with reason, and secure from the assaults of scepticism in any form. The advance of science had no alarm for Unitarianism. The two departments of truth ran in parallel lines, not antagonistic, but mutually supporting. But, above all, Unitarianism was a practical religion, and by a practical test they were willing to abide. The tree is known by its fruits.—Mr. J. Barron said he had not always been a Unitarian—four years at most. In his early years he heard but little of it, and was shy of it. The religion he had been taught made him afraid of God. There was so much in it about everlasting punishment that he feared at night to sleep lest he should awake in hell. He often thought of the text, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," and Unitarian truth had made him free. He found the truth in the Bible a firm rock; standing there he had no fear. The dreadful doctrine of everlasting punishment was now seldom taught in neighbouring churches. The ministers seldom preach it; the intelligent portion of their audiences would be offended,

having ceased to believe it. They were much encouraged by their progress here, and hoped that before long they would have a place of worship of their own in which to meet. (Applause.) On the motion of Mr. Barron, seconded by Mr. Edgar Robinson, thanks were voted to the ladies who had presided at elegantly decorated and well-provided tables; to the singers, to the Rev. S. Fletcher Williams, and others, who had rendered hearty and gratuitous help, promotive of the enjoyments of the evening. The proceedings terminated by Mr. Dawson moving a vote of thanks to the chairman, which was seconded by Mr. Lewthwaite.

WHAT a change has come over Oxford! The arch-heretic and saintly scholar, Benjamin Jowett, is, amid general greetings, appointed Vice-Chancellor. A few years ago the most frantic efforts were made to drive him from his Chair, or starve him out of it, and now he is the real head of the University; and yet he is the same man, just as free and Catholic, as wide in his sympathies and communions, and as far apart from the common orthodoxies as ever he was. Verily the world is moving on, and better days are dawning.

MANCHESTER New College has commenced its new session under the most favourable circumstances. The students are now resident in University Hall, and have the advantage of meeting with lay students there, and personal contact with Principal Morley and his son, the Dean of Residence, as well as with the distinguished Principal and Professors of the College. Our young men, both from England and Ireland, have splendid educational opportunities now, and it is to be hoped they will avail themselves of them. They should not waste time; but use the great advantages which are offered to them. In Manchester New College and the Home Missionary Board, to say nothing of the valuable institution at Caermarthen, our young men have now all the educational facilities they need in preparation for the work of the ministry.

THE Inaugural Soiree of the eleventh session of the Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association took place on Monday evening, October 2nd, in the school-room, Rosemary Street. There was a large attendance of members and their friends. After tea an adjourn-

ment took place to the Lecture Hall. On the motion of Mr. James M. Darbishire, seconded by Mr. W. J. Roche, the chair was taken by the President of the Association, Rev. J. C. Street.

The Chairman, in the course of his address, traced the history of the Association since its formation ten years ago, and pointed out how it had been successful beyond the most sanguine hopes entertained regarding it. Now, he believed, it was more representative, more catholic, and more useful than it had ever been. Last season it had a roll of 155 paying members, and this season he expected they would have 180 or 200 paying members. Considering that they met under the presidency of a very heretical parson, they really must congratulate themselves on their success. (Laughter.) The aims of the Society were, as they knew, the moral and intellectual development of its members, and the promotion of social intercourse and culture amongst them. As to whether the Members had benefited morally from their connexion with the Association in the past it was difficult to say, but he really thought there had been some solid improvement in that direction. He could speak with great confidence regarding the intellectual benefit which had been received. In the essays they had heard read during the past session he thought they saw considerable proof of intellectual strength and talent. He had read lengthened reports of Parliamentary and other discussions, and he did not hesitate to say that debates could hardly take place anywhere of a higher order than those in which the members had engaged during the past session. It did not disclose very great ambition to say that, for was there not before every man a really brilliant career if he would only work it for himself? There was no position which was not now open to the cultured, earnest, capable man. (Hear, hear.) Referring to the future of the Society, he said they sought to direct the attention of each member in the direction which seemed best to suit his capacity. The poet, the historian, the philosopher—all these found their different positions, and yet one was not suited to the work of the other. In the present age individuality of action and thought was becoming much less marked than it once was. Now a smattering of everything without marked proficiency in anything was the order of the day. A man does not read a new book now he has not time to do so—so he reads a critique on it and

fancies he thoroughly understands the subject treated. The great aim of that Association would in the future be to preserve that individuality which was so much required for the general benefit of mankind. (Applause.)

The address was listened to with great attention. During the evening songs were rendered by Mrs. Hyndman and Mr. Hiram Galloway, pianoforte solos and duets by Mr. Gordon and the Misses Stronge, and a violin solo by Mr. Balfour. Several members exhibited interesting collections—Dr. Henry Burden showing microscopic views, Mr. Adam Millin a handsome model of the steamship *Great Eastern*, and a pretty fountain which played in front of the chairman's table during the evening. Mr. J. W. Kinnear sent a valuable collection of Australian war clubs and interesting Irish curiosities. Dr. Hyndman's contribution consisted of a number of Chinese views, and Mr. Thomas E. Osborne's graphoscope was an object of interest.

On October 9th, Mr. F. D. F. O'Connor delivered an able and interesting address, entitled, "Egypt and Erin." The address referred particularly to the existing Egyptian difficulty, and traced the course of events that culminated in the present position. Mr. O'Connor denounced the war as being a bondholder's war, and undertaken for the purpose of collecting British debts at the point of the bayonet. He did not claim for Arabi the title of hero, but that he might have been one had his and his country's surroundings been more fortunate than they were. An animated discussion on the Paper ensued, the Rev. James Cooper, Messrs. W. J. Roche, Thomas McClelland, George Fisher, and A. J. Liversedge, and the President taking part.

On Monday evening, October 11th, a Lecture on "Buddha, his Life and Teachings," was delivered by Mr. Wm. Hoey, D.Lit., J.P., Bengal Civil Service. There was a large attendance. The Chair was occupied by the President of the Association. The Lecture proved a highly interesting and instructive one. Commencing with a sketch of the period in which Buddha appeared, and the prevailing religious thoughts of the age, the lecturer dwelt upon the life of Buddha as a Prince and subsequently as a philosophical inquirer. He then sketched his teaching, explaining the cardinal tenets of his pessimism, reviewing his career as a teacher, and finally describing graphically the closing scenes of his life. Mr. Herbert Darbi-

shire in proposing a vote of thanks to Dr. Hoey for his thoughtful essay, remarked that the desertion of his wife by Buddha, as tradition had chronicled it, appeared at variance with the other acts of his life. Dr. Hoey replied that he regarded Buddha's treatment of his wife as a result of his early Hindoo instruction, which countenanced a man's desertion of his wife, and his retirement into solitude to prepare for death after he had reared a family. Mr. George Fisher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

On the evening of October 23rd, the Society was favoured with a paper, entitled, "An Ulsterman Abroad," by Mr. J. H. Aston. The paper gave a very amusing and humorous account of the writer's meeting in Hamburg with an Ulsterman and the manner in which they spent Christmas and the New Year in a strange land.

OUR readers will note that, during the 16th, 17th, and 18th Oct., the Provincial Meeting of the British and Foreign Unitarian Society, together with the Annual Meetings of the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association, have been held in Glasgow. Our representative was the Rev. J. J. Wright; and the notes of our correspondent below will be interesting to our readers.

SCOTCH NOTES.

WE have Seven Churches in Scotland. They form, shall I say, a sort of "Seven-branched Candlestick," extending from Glasgow to Edinburgh, Paisley, and Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen. In Glasgow the Revs. Frank Walters and A. Webster are doing each his own work, one at the west and the other at the east end. In Edinburgh, "the Athens" of the North, the Rev. R. B. Drummond, B.A., faithfully manifests the light and learning of our Gospel. Perth and Paisley are without settled ministers at present. The Revs. H. Williamson struggles persistently for the cause in Dundee; while in Aberdeen the Rev. George Walters is doing hard and successful service. These Seven Churches, with their five ministers, are all, practically, associated together, under the Scottish Unitarian Christian Association. Just lately this Association has had left to it a legacy of £3,500, with no conditions attached, save that it is to be used by said Association. The question arose, how shall this money be laid out? As the time for the Association's Annual Meeting was approaching, it was thought well to invite the British and Foreign Unitarian Society of London, to hold its Autumnal Meeting in Glasgow, that while there, the Local Association might take counsel with the deputation from head quarters as to the wisest way of expending the £3,500. The British and Foreign Unitarian Society therefore, admirably represented by S. S. Taylor, Esq., (Treasurer), Rev. H. Ierson, M. A., (Secretary), David Ainsworth, Esq., M.P., (President), J. R. Jeffrey, Esq., and Rev. Dr. Crosskey, went to Glasgow, and, on Monday evening, the 17th ult., held, in St. Vincent Street Church, a capital provincial meeting. On Tuesday afternoon and evening the meetings of the Scottish Association took place, and the prevailing idea at those gatherings seemed

to be that the £3,500 should be largely used in assisting the Seven Churches already in existence. For example these churches are first of all to be helped out of any debt they may at present stand in, and also to be assisted in making such improvements about their buildings as will add to their comfort and attractiveness. This to the extent of £100 for each Church. More important still was the scheme put forward by Mr. Puller, and generally accepted, to grant yearly to the weaker Churches in proportion to the amounts they themselves raised. For instance a church raising within itself £100 might receive a grant of £50, and so on in proportion. But this is nothing more than the bare outline of the beginning to use this legacy, and for the rest a good deal of "flexibility" was to be allowed in order that no good purpose concerning our cause in Scotland might be excluded from receiving aid out of the Legacy Fund.

It was the Annual Meeting of the Scottish Association, held on Tuesday evening, with which we had more to do. St. Vincent Street Church was full of beauty and life by about half-past seven on that evening, beauty of flowers, music, and twenty (*not* love-sick) maidens serving tea, and twenty men from England, Ireland, and Scotland, ready to make speeches. There were twenty indeed, and the twenty speeches were made, none (except the Chairman's) exceeding seven or ten minutes, and not one but had some pith and point in it. A most admirable opening speech was that of the Chairman, John Puller, Esq. And he evidently knows the difficulty, either of preparing good speeches, or of writing good sermons, for he said "the men who can write one good sermon every week are few and the man who can write two or three a week is not yet born." The Scotch ministers in the present day he remarked stood, as said the old proverb, "atween the deil and the deep sea" the deil, said Mr. Puller, of recantation and the deep sea of starvation. But we must refer our readers to the full report of the Chairman's speech which will doubtless be given in the *Unitarian Herald*.

Among these twenty speeches came this word from our own Unitarian Society: "I have to bring you, of the Scottish Unitarian Association, the best wishes, the good will and the most ardent spiritual co-operation of the Unitarian Society, Ireland. That Society, as some of you are aware, had its jubilee some eighteen months ago, at which meetings we had the pleasure to welcome a representative from the Scottish Association. For several years past at our annual meetings we have been favoured in the same way. It was but meet, then, that our Society should do its best, especially on such an occasion as this, to send a representative to your meetings. There are many points of similarity between the two organizations, and there is needed for each of them the same courage and mutual encouragement. The Society I represent costs us about £100 a year, which is generously raised by subscriptions and collections. We keep a Depository in Belfast, where the liberal-thoughted books of the day are kept continually in the foreground. It may give some indication of the value of such a Depository, if I tell you that during the past year some £400 worth of books were sold over its counter. The Society publishes a little paper called *The Chronicle and Index*, a thousand copies of which are distributed gratuitously every month. That periodical is a "Chronicle" of the doings of the Unitarian Society, the churches connected with it, and of such churches or institutions as manifest in anyway anything like its thought; and it is an "Index" of the best books that come to our counter from month to month, such books as our readers may do well to procure. There is also connected with the Society a Sunday School Department whose duties are to take an interest in our various Sunday Schools, and especially to arrange for Conferences of Teachers, Elder Scholars, and friends. This is the Society whose greetings I bring you, and, having thus "magnified" the Society, I am sent to represent, you discover at once how poor a representative I am of it."

This is pretty much, so far as my memory serves, what

I said, on this head, as the representative of the Unitarian Society, Ireland, to the Scottish Unitarian Association on that evening.

On the Wednesday evening there was a Congregational Meeting of the Unitarians of Aberdeen. Although somewhat hastily summoned, the people turned up at the Meeting two hundred strong. It did one's heart good to find this "city of granite" having within it such a warm, vital, vigorous centre of Unitarianism. Yet, why not? The native place of George Macdonald, (author of Robert Falconer, &c.) the scene of Robertson Smith's discovered heresy, the home of Professor Bain, the place of many Book Shops, and a University, why should there *not* be Unitarianism there? and Unitarianism there is both outside and inside the Unitarian Church. We found the free faith, bold, hopeful, energetic, under the unflinching, deep-passioned thoughtfulness and leadership of our old college colleague Rev. George Walters, whose people stand around him bravely, a very wall of fire and strength. On that Wednesday evening Mr. Walters took the Chair, after tea, and speeches being delivered by the minister, by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, of London, by your representative from Belfast, and by Rev. A. Webster, of Glasgow. The meeting seemed to warm up to the heat of solid enthusiasm, so much so as to make a stranger, who had strayed in, a genuine Aberdonian of education, confess to your correspondent after the meeting, "Well, I must say, you have almost persuaded me this night to become a Unitarian!"

ONE of the bravest and best pieces of work being done in Scotland for our cause is that by the Rev. Alexander Webster of Glasgow. Feeling intensely that ours is the faith the people need, and would accept if they only knew what it was, he has, during the summer, gone to the crowds that meet on Sunday evenings on Glasgow Green, and there he has taken his stand, and put our Gospel plainly before the people. From five to seven hundred men listened to him every Sunday. They sought eagerly for Unitarian tracts, and some 5,000 such, supplied by the British and Foreign and the Scottish Associations, were circulated. With admirable tact, with earnest thoughtfulness, with cheerful self-sacrifice, Mr. Webster has been doing his work. And is still doing, but indoors now as the winter lectures, social, biographical, theological, in St. Mungo Street, have begun.

IN Dundee the Rev. H. Williamson has a most difficult position to hold for Unitarianism, as that town is now the home of the popular heretic David Macrae whose church with its thousand members easily gathers within itself the ever increasing number of the more liberally inclined whose natural refuge otherwise would be the Unitarian Church.

SOME of the exceedingly fine Discourses, delivered to his congregation at St. Vincent Street, from Sunday to Sunday, by the Rev. Frank Walters, are to have a wider influence. The members of his church, and the many strangers who join them of an evening, have often felt that the profoundly thoughtful and spiritual utterances they are privileged to hear from St. Vincent Street pulpit would be precious to a larger number of people than could possibly gather within the walls of the church, an arrangement has therefore been made to have some of these Discourses printed from time to time. It is intended to publish a Sermon once a month at the price of a penny. The friends are desirous of publishing not only Mr. Walters's Sermons but some of the very best that are ever preached by our eminent Unitarian ministers. An effort is to be made to get one from Dr. Martineau to open the series. Others are then to follow each month, Mr. Walters's among them. A large number of copies are to be struck off for free distribution at and around our pioneering churches. If the Scottish Association could employ a man for several days each month to take these sermons and sell or give them in Glasgow and elsewhere we doubt not that splendid service would, by this means, be done towards the spread of our faith in Scotland.

ROSEMARY STREET
Mutual Improvement Association.
ELEVENTH SESSION

THE COMMITTEE of the ROSEMARY STREET MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION have great pleasure in announcing that they have made arrangements with

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8:

"Seven years' Investigation of Mesmerism and its Kindred Phenomena."

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10:

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Rosemary Street Mutual Improvement Association.

ELEVENTH SESSION—1882-83.

The Committee have much pleasure in announcing the following

PROGRAMME UNTIL CHRISTMAS, 1882.

1882.
Oct. 2—Opening Soiree.
" 9—Paper, "Egypt and Erin" Mr. F. D. F. O'Connor.
" 16—Lecture, "Buddha: His Life and Teachings," Mr. W. Hoey, D. Lit., J.P., of Her Majesty's Bengal Civil Service.
" 23—Paper, "An Ulsterman Abroad," Mr. J. H. Aston.
" 30—Paper, "The Message of Gotama," Mr. W. Dempster.
Nov. 6—Music and Readings.
" 13—Paper, "Notes of a short Tour in Canada and United States," Mr. John M. Dobbin.
" 20—Lecture, "The Laws of Organic Life," Prof. Gordon, M.D.
" 27—Paper, "Law, and our dutiful Obedience thereto," Mr. W. J. Roche.
Dec. 4—Music and Readings.
" 11—Discussion—(Subject will be duly announced.)
" 18—Lecture—Rev. J. C. Street.

THE OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION
ARE—

First, the intellectual and moral advancement of its Members; and secondly, the furtherance of fellowship and acquaintance among them.

The Meetings are held on MONDAY EVENINGS at Eight o'clock, in the Rosemary Street Schools.

ADMISSION—To Lectures and Discussion, Members Free: Non-Members, Sixpence each. To Papers and Music and Readings—Free.

MEMBERS' SUBSCRIPTION—4s per Annum, which entitles to the use of Library.

The Librarian will be in attendance after service on Sunday Morning, and on every Monday Evening during the session.

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AGENTS WANTED.

BOOKS.

- SCOTCH SERMONS.** MacMillan & Co. Published at 11/6. To be had at the Depository. 16 Queen's Arcade, for 8/-
- THE STORY OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND.** By Brooke Herford. Published at 5/-. To be had at the Depository for 3/7.
- TALKS ABOUT JESUS.** By M. J. Savage, Boston, U.S.A. To be had at Depository for 4/2.
- PLAY WITH YOUR OWN MARBLES.** And other stories. By J. J. Wright. Second Edition. To be had at Depository for 9d.
- JESUS OF NAZARETH.** By Edward Clodd. To be had at Depository for 4/6.
- THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF THEODORE PARKER.** By P. Dean. To be had at Depository for 2/-
- STORIES FROM THE LIPS OF THE TEACHER.** By O. B. Frothingham. To be had at Depository for 1/6.
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